

## The Brethren Evangelist

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### The Orator of the Wilderness and His Work.

One of the most famous orators of all ages was the Messianic Forerunner of the Wilderness of Judea. But one man in all the ages of time introduced more to the realization of man than he. In glancing at his fame and the work he done in the world, it is instructive also to examine the preparatory scenes of that life.

Born of one past age, who implored God that her reproach might be taken away, and that the precious line of genealogy direct from Aaron, God's father of the Priesthood, might be preserved, she was answered by the gift of a remarkable son.

John, the Baptist, was born, precious beyond the power of the human tongue to express, to the godly, loving and anxious parents, he was educated at his mother's knee, and from the Hebrew Bible alone. Thus uncontaminated with the tradition of the elders, the dogmas of heathen philosophy, and the silly clap-trap of popular society, God received him pure, as nature's cleanest crystal, to further educate him for the majestic mission for which he was sent into the world. Thus when about twenty two years of age, God takes him by the hand and leads him into his own unbounded school-room for training. In the wilderness of Judea he takes up his abode away from the busy marts of trade, the scenes of art and fashion and all that unfits the mind to originate and the body to display, the eloquence that sweeps humanity before it.

Socrates took up his abode in a cave, and with his mouth full of pebbles, he stood by the roaring waters for years that he might make his voice mighty, and catch the inspiration of nature's eloquence that he might speak as men seldom speak.

Forten long years John the Baptist was in God's own school of training, that he might introduce the Son of God to the human family in a master's manner. Gabriel had caused John to be put under the Nazarite's vow from his birth, which exempted him from attendance upon the three annual feasts at Jerusalem, and while he was but a few months older than the Son of God, he was not acquainted with him. But alone in the wilderness, subsisting upon a purely naturally prepared diet, his physical body became immensely strong and vigorous, and his soul was saturated with

the true eloquence of nature. He gathered inspiration, not from the roaring waters of the sea like Socrates, but from the howl of the wild beast that made his den in the wilderness, the singing birds that perched plentifully upon the shrubbery in which he moved, from the clear, rippling waters of the most famous river of any land, the Jordan. His clothes was a camel's skin which he tied around him with a leather belt.

In appearance, like an animal, he comes forth from his den in the wilderness, and he makes one long tremendous cry, like the roar of a lion, which courses its way along the valley of the Jordan, through the mountain passes, up over the hills and across the seas. 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!' The power, eloquence, and beauty of the cry, awoke the thousands of inhabitants of the land, and multitudes thronged about him. He baptized for hours those who desired the preparation to 'meet him who should follow after.' At last the ecclesiastical lords of Israel were aroused and they followed the multitude. John saw them in the distance approaching, and another wonderful peal came from his mighty voice, 'Oh ye generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the coming wrath?' This must have stung them to the heart-core.

Soon the blessed son came. The Holy Spirit moved in his heart, and such a voice as had not been heard before nor since, pealed out upon the breezes of the wilderness, 'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.'

He desires baptism. The two mighty of God consult together, they move toward the Jordan. Jesus is baptized. Oh wonderful results!

John was born a priest. His father officiated in the temple as a priest, and his mother was one of the daughters of Aaron—born a genuine priest. But he takes the Nazarite's vow and is exempt from all the ceremonial usages and resides in the wilderness, where he keeps no Jewish ordinance or ceremonial. Kept pure and clean to found the new theocracy, the church of Christ.

Jesus comes to him a Jew, one who belongs to the church of the Priesthood, one who kept the passover, the feast of weeks and all the other ceremonies of the law. He did every thing that the law required at his hands in the way of ceremonials. He was Jewish through and through in his outward manner of worship.

Thus he goes to John to be baptized, 'And when the great Baptist bowed the immaculate soul and body of Jesus beneath the parting waves, all the useless ceremonies of past ages sank together like lead to find a grave in the opening waters of the Jordan, and no place has since been found for them.' Jesus buried the 'old man' in Jordan—Jewish ceremonies—and he arose as the king and kingdom of heaven. Baptized in the name of the Father, he took upon him the character of the Father; in the name of the Son, divinity became a part of his nature; and baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, it abode upon him and constituted his anointing. O sublime scene!

The Son, who from the begin-

ning abode with the Father, descended and united with the Son-human as he emerged from the grave of ceremonies, the waters of Jordan, and became the God-man Christ Jesus.

John, the orator of the wilderness represented the new, Jesus the old, and when he came up out of Jordan, he too was in the new. He was no longer a Jew. He belonged to and formed a part, the head of the new. He no longer observed the feasts. He no longer kept the passover as an institution of Moses and the Jews. To him old things had passed away. He promulgates a new law of living, (The sermon on the mount); he introduces new ordinances. He then and there planted the bed-rock of the congregation of Jesus Christ. There is where the church started, the Brethren church started there—when Jesus began to raise out of Jordan. Glory to God!

### EDITORIAL NOTES.

The old Jewish Philosopher, Philo, is accredited with this comment upon the account of the Creation:

"It follows that the Mosaic account of creation cannot be received in its literal sense. The six days denote, not a chronological succession, but an order attaching to created things. Now order is a sequence and series, if not in the actual effects, at least in thought. Number accordingly, belongs to it, and serves to express it; and in the present instance the number six is chosen on account of its perfection and because it contains the male and female principles, being the product of three and two, the first of the odd and even, or the male and female numbers."

The Fathers inclined to the view that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years with man; and therefore the creation was a work of six thousand years duration.

Restoring union between divided parties did not meet with much success last year. Early in the year the United Presbyterians and Reformed Presbyterians tried to form a union without accomplishing anything. Another effort of this class was made by the Dutch Reformed and the German Reformed churches without results. The famous Spurgeon withdrew from the Baptist Union, because it retained ministers in fellowship, who were unsound in doctrine, and an effort was made to restore him, but he is still out and the breach is wider than ever between them.

Some time ago the courts in Chicago disposed of thirty-five divorce cases in the space of one hour. This is running the divorce mill at high pressure, and beats all previous records.

The Bible allows divorces for one cause, namely, adultery, but the Courts of the land, allow divorces for almost any cause. Marriage laws will soon be made inoperative by divorces, if looseness continues to so increase.

We wish that every reader in Indiana, and elsewhere, too, would carefully read sister Helen Frame's report on the Indiana Mission work. More earnestness should be thrown in such work. Ministers of Indiana, arouse to the work before you. A better showing should be made. Make the \$31 at least \$100.

Yes, yes can be said to the Nappanee, Endeavor. When there is sufficient funds in the general treasury, an Evangelist will be set to work.

Forgiveness and Healing is the subject of the S. S. lesson next Lord's day, Mark 2:1, 12. A palsied man was carried to Christ. He can forgive sins and cure diseases, man can do neither. But he can bring people to Christ, who will forgive and heal. How forcibly man's duties are set forth in that incident. His duties are to do what he can do. And in the saving of souls, he is able only to bring others to Christ. To the people who had gathered, the Saviour preached 'the word.' This men can do, so that he has a dual office in the plan of salvation; to preach the word and bring the people to Jesus to be pardoned of their sins and healed. It therefore is the duty of every child of God to 'carry' sinners to Jesus. The one who is not concerned about the work is falling short. He is not performing his whole duty to Christ and his fellowmen.

A Brother sends us this item: the colored woman's prayer:

There is need of praying similar to that made by an old colored woman who, praying for one who had been guilty of slander, said: O Lord, won't you be kind enough to take the door of his mouth off, and when you put it on again, just hang it on the Gospel hinges of peace on earth and good will to men? Amen.

We can say to Bro. Beer that our relation in every way has always been accompanied by peace and good-will.

Here is a little verse that tries to express a great want.

"God give us men! a time like this demands

Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands.

Men whom the lust of office does not kill;

Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;

Men who possess opinions and a will, Men who have honor; men who will not lie;

Men who can stand a demagogue, And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking."

The Herald of Gospel Liberty says this about creeds:

"Church creeds are high walls builded between parties that should and would embrace in cordial Christian fellowship. They are utterly unreasonable in that they voice the actual convictions of only a few who profess them. Probably no creed of any church is the actual voice of more than half of its membership, and yet the adoption of it by the body proclaims it as the positive faith of all. Thus the creed becomes a dishonest and untruthful profession. It is a shame to seek to bend the mind arbitrarily toward any form of belief, and he who does it virtually discourages and suppresses earnest and honest investigation. A thousand converts, under a Lutheran or Presbyterian ministry, would almost to a person accept the creeds of those churches as their own statements of faith, while, had the same thousand persons been brought to Christ under a Methodist or Baptist ministry, they would as uniformly have accepted the creeds of these churches as embodying their theological thought. The creed is a yoke on liberty and a bar to natural and beautiful fellowship."

Moody ends a sermon on the Second Advent in this forcible manner:

Now, I want to give you some texts to study:

When we eat the Lord's supper we show forth His death until He come. 1 Cor. 11:26.

We are using our talent, until He come. Luke 10:13.

We are fighting the good fight of faith, until He come. 1 Tim. 6:15-14.

We are enduring tribulation, until He come. 2 Thess 1:7.

We are to be patient, until He come. James 5:8.

We wait for the crown of righteousness, until He come. 2 Tim. 4:8.

We wait for the crown of glory, until He come. 1 Pet. 5:4.

We wait for reunion with departed friends, until He come. 1 Thess 4:13-18.

We wait for Satan to be bound, until He come. Rev. 20:3.

Writing and preaching on the prophecies are discounted by many, with the expression that it does not matter whether they are understood or not. But about one fourth of the entire Bible is composed of prophecies concerning Christ, relating to his work, his first and his second advent. The Saviour himself commands to search the scriptures, and when he uttered that command, he spoke of the Old Testament, for none of the New was written. Nearly half of the Old Testament is prophecy, much of which will not be fulfilled until Christ's second advent and personal reign with the saints in the millennium. Destiny is laid open before man, and there is no reason that he should not be wise unto his complete salvation in Jesus Christ, and unto the coming of His kingdom which shall be the fullness of joy to the saint.

Bishop McLaren, in ordaining a preacher the other Sunday, said some sensible things about sensational preaching. The sermon is the thing worshiped now and the pulpit is the altar. The question is not so much whether a preacher will preach the gospel, but whether he will "draw." Nor does the bishop find sensationalism alone in the pulpit, but it "is eating like a hideous gangrene" in every direction. 'Gorgeous ceremonials,' 'artistic music,' and 'decorative carzes' are running rampant. 'Churches are covered with crosses,' the congregations in which do not believe in the atonement. It may not be rhetorically precise to call all these things sensational, but they are senseless enough, and are a source of weakness to the cause of Christ.

Bro. A. M. Ridenour presents to the readers this week a case of true devotion to the good cause. It is such oc-

casional evidences of love for the salvation of men that take away the pangs of the toil and sacrifice and sweetens the tribulations which are met on the path of devotion to the cause of truth. Two dollars and a half are placed to the credit of dear sister Reader, on the College record. It is no great sum, but with it she contributes her heart's desires and prayer to God that the work may succeed. It is the widow's mite that calls forth the loving approbation of our blessed Jesus. She is worshipping her loving Saviour with her money as well as with her tongue. To such who are faithful, there is in reserve a great and exceeding weight of glory. To the dear sister the shadow of life is drawing long, and will compass her about, and her friends will soon lay to rest the earthly form, but the kindly deeds she has done will be remembered tender to her memory in earth, and sweetly by the angels of God. She has given of her scanty means to make another soul happy.

We learn in a roundabout way that Prof. Howard Miller is no longer connected with the McPherson College, in Kansas. A Miss Davidson, a member of the River Brethren church takes his place.

Human nature is as unchangeable as any thing man has to do with. The same passions, loves and hates, aspirations and desires proceed therefrom now as in the days of the antediluvians. It proceeds indeed from two chief beings, Satan and God, and it can not therefore be expected to change. Men are men under any circumstances of life.

What a wonderful work would be done for the Lord if there were plenty of means to keep those busy who desire to spend their time in the work. And there would be an abundance of means if people could only abandon the lusts of the flesh and use the means which they possess in the work of saving men from death eternal.

Four things come not back, the angry word, the spent arrow, the past life, the neglected opportunity.—Hazlitt.

Many unhappy persons seem to imagine that they are always in an amphitheater, with the assembled world as spectators, whereas, all the while, they are playing to empty benches.

### LITERATURE.

The True Protestant, a red-hot little paper, published in Chicago, has changed its office to 122 N. Carpenter St. It is anti-Catholic, or against the Roman Catholic church.

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE: An essay, containing a terrible arraignment of the Civilization and Christianization of the Present Age, from which and from other considerations is argued the need of a New Era, which is announced as certain and believed to be imminent. Twenty-four pages, octavo. Three cents. Published by the C. M. Mission Society, 817 North Forty-fifth Street, Philadelphia. 1889.

This essay exposes the weak places in our civilization, and the sins of the Church without deference to sect, church or party. In the spirit of John the Baptist, it calls the Church and the World to repentance. The tone, though terrible in its denunciation of the evils which appear to be so nearly triumphant, is still hopeful, and full of promise of the new era which it is written to announce.

### The Brethren Annual.

Every family of the Brethren church should secure a copy of the Annual. It is a first rate Calender and contains such church news as every one desires to know. It is worth ten cents to any one concerned in the work. It contains a small, but accurate portrait of Elder S. C. Stump, a pioneer progressive, that many will want to see. Price ten cents each, by mail, or \$1.00 per dozen BRETHREN PUB. HOUSE.

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